

## “No Regrets” Top-Ten Service Coordination List

- Integrated MARTA/Xpress Joint Fare Product Regional Pilot

*Issue* – The Breeze System has become the common fare media for the Atlanta regional transit system. Other than the cash balance product and stored inter-agency transfers (per the Breeze Agreements and MARTA Reciprocal Fare Agreements) there are no regional passes in the current system, each transit system has placed its own fare table and products on the system. Based on customer feedback through both the transit operator customer service centers and the TMA Network as well as issues that have arisen as a result of Xpress service wholly within the MARTA service area, the need for a joint unlimited ride fare product is desired for resolving some transfer issues. Additionally TPB staff have heard through the public involvement process related to Concept 3 a desire from the public to see integrated fare products as transit trips in the region increasingly involve more than one provider. Currently the purchasing of multiple passes for commutes that involve multiple transit operators (i.e. commutes like Newnan to Buckhead, which would involve Xpress and MARTA) requires a complex analysis by the patron to figure out which fare products apply, how the free transfers work, and subsequently decide on the purchase of unlimited ride passes or discounted bulk trips for each provider depending on the economics for the patron and their travel habits. Joint fare products would greatly simplify this process for the customer.

*Staff Requirements* – Establish joint working group between MARTA and GRTA staffs to explore feasibility of a joint unlimited ride fare product to become a fare product on the Breeze AFC system.

*Resource Requirements* – fare product will have revenue implications as well as expense implications for both parties. Breeze system will have reprogramming costs and a fare revenue sharing methodology will have to be developed. A market study will need to determine the potential number of joint passes that would be sold. Upon completion of the study implementation will require close cooperation with the TMA community as well as marketing efforts to communicate the availability and applicability of the joint fare product. The Breeze Clearinghouse will need to set up a financial reporting system to track usage and for revenue allocation and the *breezecard.com* web site will require updating to reflect information and purchasing capability for the new product.

- In-town Express Bus Layover

*Issue* – the growth of express bus services from the suburbs to downtown and midtown Atlanta has led to congestion problems related to express buses staging and laying over in the CBD area. It is not only a nuisance for traffic flow but also for the growing residential population within the CBD area. The transit operators, through the TPB Service Coordination Council, have indicated

that the lack of a layover location is causing negative impacts on transit operations as well. Staff has identified three potential locations of which any or all could provide benefits. The locations are the SRTA property in Atlantic Station, the Civic Center Parking Lot and the Turner Field Parking lots.

*Staff Requirements* - the Service Coordination Council of the TPB will attempt to secure permission to use any or all of the lots. Legal agreements will need to be drafted and the TPB will require in-kind legal assistance from counsel from a partner agency. Additionally TPB staff will need executive management and board member assistance to communicate the need to the owner(s) of the various properties.

*Resource Requirements* – the intent is to secure use of the properties for free given the mutual benefits to the public sector.

- Regional Trip Itinerary Planning System / Google Transit

*Issue* – the Regional Trip Itinerary Planning System under development is designed to give the region a trip planning tool for transit similar to MapQuest or other mapping services for car travel. It is important not only as a customer resource, but back office use by call-center employees and scheduling staff will have better customer service tools at their disposal. The integration of the region's transit system scheduling data into one database will also allow MARTA to export all of the data to Google for use in their Google Transit application. Agreements have been executed between MARTA and GRTA, but negotiations between MARTA and the remaining transit providers need to be restarted to resolve remaining outstanding issues.

*Staff Requirements* – funding for the program will handle staffing requirements.

*Resource Requirements* – the MARTA proposed agreements for integration of GRTA Xpress, CCT, GCT and C-TRAN systems into RTIP call for a monthly “maintenance fee” to fund increased staffing levels related to maintaining the regional scheduling database. This database will include not only service schedules, but detailed geographic location of park and ride lots, bus stop locations, bus route transfer locations, fare information, trip times and rail stations. It will be updated each time a transit operator changes any services. Google Transit is no-cost subject to the terms of the Google Transit Agreement, but Google Transit cannot be implemented without the establishment and maintenance of the RTIP database.

- Regional Transit System Map Update

*Issue* – the TPB created a regional transit system map in 2007 that for the first time showed the services of all of the regional transit providers, to include shuttles and university providers. New and changed transit services have been introduced since the creation of the map so it is now somewhat dated and requires an update.

*Staff Requirements* – TPB and partner staff as well as contractor staff would provide the data and update work.

*Resource Requirements* – TPB has some budgeted funds in TPB fund balance to implement the update. A donor to offset printing costs as well as a commitment from the partner agencies to not only distribute but to display the map in rail stations, at transfer centers, park and rides, on websites and at rail stations is desired.

- “Breeze Accepted Aboard” Decal

*Issue* – in December 2006 the TPB acted to encourage the creation of a standard decal to be applied to all transit buses and paratransit vans that accept the Breezecard. This would help create the image of a regional seamless transit system and promote the use of the breezecard.com website.

*Staff Requirements* – MARTA Marketing staff has created a proof of the decal.

*Resource Requirements* – The costs of printing circa 2000 decals for a first phase deployment as well as management commitment to implement the decal is desired. Identification of the lead agency for implementation is needed.

- Facilities Sharing

*Issue* – The TPB Service Coordination Council has identified several instances where transit systems could benefit from sharing facilities. These include not only vehicle storage garages but also in the area of vehicle maintenance. This potentially assists with the more cost-effective delivery of services.

*Staff Requirements* – this is a case-by-case ongoing service coordination item.

*Resource Requirements* – this is a case-by-case issue that requires the attention and buy-in of executive management.

- 17<sup>th</sup> Street Busway / Atlantic Station

*Issue* – Access to the Arts Center Station / Midtown area for buses is a challenge, particularly with the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge reconstruction project. Given the high levels of congestion in the area and the continued growth of the Atlantic Station Development, maintaining good transit bus travel times through the area is critical. The area is served by regional express buses,

MARTA local bus, the Atlantic Station Shuttle as well as university shuttles and paratransit services. Additionally 17<sup>th</sup> Street has become an important link for MARTA Mobility paratransit access to the MARTA Brady Avenue Garage and access for Georgia Tech and Georgia State University buses to the MARTA Perry Boulevard CNG refueling facility. CCT local bus service to Cobb County also operates extensive service on the corridor. MARTA, TPB and GRTA staff have worked with GDOT District 7 staff to refresh the striping on the busway, but there are still some design elements that can be improved. MARTA has FTA grant funding for transportation infrastructure on 17<sup>th</sup> Street and GRTA has done some preliminary design work related to correcting and improving the bike and bus lanes in the corridor. ARC has amended the regional fixed guideway map at MARTA request to include 17<sup>th</sup> Street so it is also eligible for additional federal formula funding. The bus lanes on 17<sup>th</sup> Street connect with the SRTA transit property in Atlantic Station which is proposed as a bus layover facility for many operators.

*Staff Requirements* – A working group of inter-agency MARTA and GRTA engineering staff, with technical input from the City of Atlanta and Atlantic Station to implement and construct the improvements on 17<sup>th</sup> Street is needed. This is a short duration project.

*Resource Requirements* – There is existing grant funding for the project that will require a local match. There are various options for securing the local match which need to be researched. The working group will also need to identify a process, as required by FTA for formula funding, by which the bus lanes will be enforced.

- Regional Route Numbering Hierarchy

*Issue* – The region has several conflicting bus route numbers. This causes confusion, particularly in areas where services with the same route numbers overlap, e.g. both CCT and GCT have a route 101 express bus. There continue to be customer complaints on this issue and the recent tornado service detours exacerbated the problem. TPB staff previously proposed a hierarchy and it needs to be vetted.

*Staff Requirements* – The Service Coordination Council needs to re-address the issue with an implementation mandate from executive management.

*Resource Requirements* – This will require resources both for reprogramming existing back office systems of the various transit providers as well as a public education campaign through the various customer service and marketing outlets available to the transit operators. The TMA community will be a valuable resource for implementation.

- Regional Transfer Facility Enhancements

*Issue* – there are areas where many of the regional transit providers’ services intersect that could benefit from enhanced signage and information as well as adjustments to bus stop locations. The top two locations are the MARTA Five Points and Civic Center Stations. The stop locations and signage for patron wayfinding for all services could be improved. This issue first came up regarding the detours for the Peachtree Street viaduct replacement project, since completed. GRTA has retained consultants for the Civic Center Station. Coordinated and clearly delineated stop locations will help with bus traffic flow and improve the safety of bus operations and pedestrian movements. Coordination with the City of Atlanta for additional bus lanes or bus only segments is needed. The expansion of the Alabama/Broad Bus Mall area to include Forsyth Street has been identified by the Service Coordination Council as desired. Posting of schedules, fare information and maps is desired. These efforts can become a template for other areas where services intersect.

*Staff Requirements* – Inter-agency working groups with executive management mandates are desired. There are several agency level efforts underway that need coordination.

*Resource Requirements* – delineation of bus stop locations (by agency, for example) require only signage. Restriping of streets, installation of bus only markings, installation of bus shelters or other infrastructure will require resources. Some bus shelter infrastructure may be possible under the MARTA advertising shelter contract at minimal cost, but will require City of Atlanta and Central Atlanta Progress participation and concurrence.

- Paratransit / Human Services Transportation

*Issue* – Regional connections between ADA complementary paratransit services is an area that has not received a lot of attention until recently. Implementation of local bus service coordination projects, particularly the MARTA/CCT route 12/10 project has pushed the issues related to overlapping jurisdictions and transfer policies to the fore. Additionally integration of existing ADA complementary paratransit services with other human services transportation has been identified by the Atlanta Regional Commission and other county executives as desired.

Two implementation planning efforts are underway:

- Joint Cobb County/MARTA implementation study regarding ADA complementary paratransit specifically related to the 12/10 corridor - this study will resolve the short term need for the 10/12 corridor but will also include short, medium and long term approaches to regionalization of ADA complementary paratransit services for the region.
- C-TRAN human services transportation integration pilot – MARTA is developing a pilot program for integration of Clayton County human service transportation trips to be integrated with ADA complementary paratransit trips.

The Atlanta Regional Commission is conducting two efforts that form the basis through which these projects will integrate. First is the SAFETEA-LU Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan that all regions must prepare. Second, ARC has been successful in competing nationally for a share of FTA discretionary funding related to using technology to

integrate HST transportation services. Initial planning efforts have related to the integration of all services into a central database with a call center. ADA complementary paratransit services could form a major piece of these efforts and integration of the various eligibility databases and trip scheduling systems could be the backbone of future ARC national proposals to compete for funding.

*Staff Requirements* – Inter-agency staff need to be identified as the point persons for each effort.

*Resource Requirements* – The coordination of ADA complementary paratransit services will not be a resource neutral activity. The CCT/MARTA study will attempt to document the costs associated with the short, medium and long term strategies based on national peer experience comparisons.